

2018 Sun Awareness Week kicks off with warning to men against sun complacency

Ottawa, May 28, 2018 – New public opinion research undertaken for the Canadian Dermatology Association (CDA) and released today to kickoff of Sun Awareness Week (May 28 to June 3), show a worrisome lack of awareness among Canadian men concerning sun safety.

“The good news is that overall the vast majority – 93% – of Canadians recognize that it is essential to protect your skin from the sun,” said Dr. Jennifer Beecker, National Chair of the CDA Sun Awareness Working Group. “The bad news is only a little more than half of the male respondents to our survey recognized that increased sun exposure increases the risk of skin cancer.”

The CDA has conducted research into Canadians’ opinions and attitudes toward sun exposure and sun protection for the past three years (dermatology.ca/statistics). Highlights from this year’s survey include:

- Significantly fewer men (55%) than women (67%) state they are concerned about the link between increased sun exposure and increased risk of skin cancer.
- Concerns over premature skin aging due to sun exposure continue to rise, – up five percentage points this year from 2016 (43% vs 38%) and nine percentage points (43% vs 34%) in 2015.
- More respondents also were concerned over the sun causing increasing brown spots on the skin in this year’s survey (30% vs. 25%) compared to 2016.
- Sunburn continues to top the list of worries for Canadians when exposing themselves to the sun with 62% saying that was their greatest fear concerning sun exposure.
- Nine in 10 (94%) agree too much sun ages your skin and that it is essential to protect your skin from the sun (93%).
- Only one quarter (25%) *strongly* agree that sunscreen is safe to use and one-quarter (24%) continue to believe the dangers of the sun are exaggerated.

“The skepticism over the safety of sunscreen and the complacency among men about the risk of skin cancer from sun exposure worries Canada’s certified dermatologists,” added Dr. Beecker. The CDA reminds Canadians that sunscreen remains a safe and effective form of sun protection. (Read the CDA’s position statement on sun protection and sunscreen use at dermatology.ca/position-statements).

Although there is significant room for improvement in some areas of awareness on sun safety, the proportion of Canadians who say they use sunscreen all year round has steadily risen since 2015 and now stands at over one quarter (26% vs. 17% in 2015) of Canadians. The number of

respondents who say it is personally *very* important for them to wear sunscreen has also risen since 2015.

Questions for the CDA Sun Awareness Survey were fielded on Ipsos Canadian online omnibus between Sept. 5 and 8, 2017 to a representative sample of 1051 Canadians age 16 year and over. A sample of this size yields a credibility interval of +/- 3.4%, 19 times out of 20.

Sun Awareness Week

The Canadian Dermatology Association has organized the nation-wide Sun Awareness Week since 1989. The aim is to educate Canadians about the dangers of too much sun and to help stop the rising incidence of skin cancer in Canada. This year's Sun Awareness Week is Monday, May 28 to Sunday, June 3, 2018.

About the CDA

The Canadian Dermatology Association, founded in 1925, represents Canadian certified dermatologists. The association provides easy access to a reliable source of medical knowledge on dermatology. CDA exists to advance the science and art of medicine and surgery related to the care of the skin, hair and nails; provide continuing professional development for its members; support and advance patient care; provide public education on sun protection and other aspects of skin health; and promote a lifetime of healthier skin, hair and nails. By doing so, CDA informs and empowers both medical professionals and the Canadian public. To learn more about what the work CDA does visit dermatology.ca or join the conversation on twitter.com/CdnDermatology, facebook.com/CdnDermatology, or instagram.com/canadiandermatologyassociation/.

-30-

For further information please contact:

Nimmi Lawrence, Officer, Marketing and Communications: (613) 738-1748 ext. 228 nlawrence@dermatology.ca